

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 9136

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, TU, GR

SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH AEGEAN PROBLEMS: NEXT STEPS

DEPARTMENT REPEAT OTHER ADDRESSEES AS DESIRED

REF: ATHENS 9072 (NOTAL)

1. I MET PRIVATELY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS AND
DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF EARLY THIS AFTERNOON FOLLOWING
THEIR EMERGENCE FROM AN "INNER CABINET" MEETING WITH
PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS. BETSIOS SAID THAT, IN ACCORD-
ANCE REFTEL, HE HAD SENT WORD TO FOREIGN MINISTER
CAGLAYANGIL RECONFIRMING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THEIR
MEETING SEPTEMBER 10-14 IN GENEVA BUT INDICATING THAT
IT WOULD BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO PARTICIPATE
IN SUCH A MEETING IF THE SISMIC I WAS CONTINUING ITS
RESEARCHES IN THE AEGEAN UP TO THOSE DATES. BITSIOS
HAD INDICATED TO CAGLAYANGIL THAT IF THE SISMIC COULD
CONCLUDE ITS OPERATIONS BY WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, THAT
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WOULD BE SATISFACTORY FROM THE GREEK POINT OF VIEW.

2. IN REPLY, CAGLAYANGIL SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO GO AHEAD WITH THE MEETINGS IN GENEVA SEPTEMBER 10-14 BUT THAT HE HAD TO INFORM BITSIOS THAT PLANS HAD BEEN MADE FOR THE SISMIK TO CONTINUE ITS OPERATIONS AT LEAST UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF SEPTEMBER AND THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE TO BE CONTINUED UNTIL "TOWARD THE END OF SEPTEMBER." CAGLAYANGIL ADDED THAT HE WOULD INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME CURTAILMENT OF THIS PROGRAMMED ACTIVITY --TO BE DONE "UNILATERALLY" BY THE TURKISH SIDE, NATURALLY. AT THE SAME TIME, CAGLAYANGIL ASKED WHETHER THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD "WITHDRAW" ITS REQUEST TO THE WORLD COURT IN THE HAGUE TO CONSIDER THE MATTER, BECAUSE CAGLAYANGIL FOUND IT UNWARRANTED AND INADVISABLE TO HAVE BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH BITSIOS ON THIS SUBJECT WHILE THE GREEK SIDE PERSISTED IN PRESENTING ITS CASE TO THE ICJ.

3. BITSIOS SAID HE WAS ADVISING CAGLAYANGIL THAT THE DECISION ON CURTAILING THE SISMIK'S PROGRAM WAS, OF COURSE, UP TO TURKEY AND THAT HE WOULD AWAIT FURTHER WORD ON THIS POINT BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH PLANS FOR THE SEPTEMBER 10-14 MEETING. BITSIOS SAID THAT IF THE SISMIK CONTINUED ITS RESEARCHES BEYOND THOSE DATES HE WOULD SIMPLY HAVE TO DEFER HIS MEETING WITH CAGLAYANGIL UNTIL THE VOYAGE WAS CONCLUDED, ALTHOUGH HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT BARRING UNFORESEEN DEVELOPMENTS HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH CAGLAYANGIL LATER IN SEPTEMBER ONCE THE SISMIK HAD RETURNED TO PORT. IN THAT CONNECTION, BITSIOS SAID HE HAD PLANNED TO ARRIVE IN NEW YORK FOR THE UNGA ON SEPTEMBER 28, BUT HAD TOLD CAGLAYANGIL HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO GO TO NEW YORK AS EARLY AS SEPTEMBER 25 IN ORDER TO HAVE THREE FULL DAYS OF BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS. ORIGINALLY, HOWEVER, THIS HAD BEEN FORESEEN AS THE FOLLOW-UP TO THEIR ANTICIPATED SEPTEMBER 10-14 MEETINGS.

4. IN ADDITION, BITSIOS SAID, HE WAS INFORMING CAGLAYANGIL THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT, WHILE UNWILLING TO "WITHDRAW" ITS SUBMISSION TO THE ICJ, WOULD BE WILLING
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TO REQUEST THE ICJ TO SET THE MATTER ASIDE FOR AN INTERVAL IN ORDER TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DEVELOPED FROM BILATERAL GREEK-TURKISH CONSULTATIONS. THUS, BITSIOS SAID, THE NEXT MOVE IS UP TO CAGLAYANGIL AND THE TURKS.

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